



North Carolina's Race to the Top Plan

Fiscal Brief

November 19, 2010

North Carolina's Race to the Top plan will accelerate a multitude of reforms – many of which were already under way in the State prior to Race to the Top

Executive Summary

This Fiscal Brief provides an overview of the federal Race to the Top (RttT) program, focusing on the effect of RttT on State and local policies and budgeting in K-12 education.

RttT is a competitive federal grant program, designed to promote innovation and reform in K-12 education. North Carolina is one of only twelve recipients of the 2010 federal RttT grants, bringing nearly \$400 million to the State's public school system for use over the next four years.

Of this amount, 50% will go to the State for efforts that benefit all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and charter schools. The remaining 50% will be provided to the participating LEAs and charter schools for expenditures that align with the policy goals and initiatives laid forth in North Carolina's RttT plan.

North Carolina's RttT plan is designed to advance and accelerate North Carolina's commitment to reform across four priorities:

1. Great Teachers and Principals
2. Data-driven Decisions at All Levels
3. Turnaround of Lowest Achieving Schools
4. Statewide Standards and Assessments

The RttT initiatives are intended to be time-limited, focusing on building capacity, developing infrastructure, and creating sustainable reform.

Introduction

The United States Department of Education (USED) awarded North Carolina's Race to the Top (RttT) grant on August 24, 2010. The RttT grant provides North Carolina with \$399 million to be spent over four years through the 2013-14 school year. Of this amount, 50% will go to the State for efforts that benefit all local education agencies (LEAs) and charter schools. The remaining 50% will be provided to the participating LEAs and charter schools for expenditures that align with the policy goals and initiatives laid forth in North Carolina's RttT plan.

RttT is not a discrete project; instead, RttT will integrate into existing educational programs to advance and accelerate education reform efforts in North Carolina. State, LEA, and charter expenditures must align with the plan set forth in North Carolina's RttT application,¹ and conform to federally-approved Detailed Scope of Work (DSW) plans.

Because RttT funds must be used on certain new or existing initiatives, RttT is not a means to alleviate potential budget reductions in future years. Instead, the funds will be used to accelerate a multitude of reforms – many of which were already under way in the State prior to RttT.

An overview of the RttT initiatives, including associated budget amounts, can be found in Appendix A.

¹ North Carolina's RttT application can be found at:
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/rttt/state/>.